THE EIGHTH DAY.

Tuesday, the 6th March 1928.

The Assembly met again at 11-30 A. M. on Tuesday, the 6th March 1928.

125. Appointment of a committee to enquire into the present condition of commerce and industry in the State.

MR. M. L. JANARDANAN PILLAI (*Member, Ambalapuzha taluk, Group II*) first of all thanked the Dewan on behalf of the merchants of Alleppey for having made arrangements with the Indian Telegraph Department for establishing a telephone system at Alleppey. This was a measure which was of immense benefit to the merchants of Alleppey and one which they never thought would take shape so soon. The member also thanked the Dewan for the keen interest which he was taking in the commercial development of the Alleppey port. As a result of the attention devoted to the development of the port, there was a phenomenal increase in the shipping activities of the port during the last two years, almost 197% over the shipping in the previous years.

But much still remained to be done in regard to the sea-borne trade of the State. In the first place there was no organisation now to advertise the goods produced or manufactured in the State. Countries like Japan and the United States of America had their own State departments of commerce which were solely engaged in issuing bulletins and trade reports. These departments were controlled by officials, but they were assisted by non-official advisory bodies drawn from the ranks of merchants and industrialists. There were also the Chambers of Commerce which worked in collaboration with the Department of Commerce. In India, the American and German consuls were circularising the merchants almost every week. They acted as publicity agents for their Governments. The Italian Government was also evincing some interest in establishing commercial relations with our State. Travancore had so far done only one thing to advertise her goods and that was by participating in the Wembley Exhibition. That step had given a very good fillip to her mats and matting trade. But other steps had to be taken and the most pressing among these was the formation of a Government Department of Commerce.

Another important question was in regard to the protection of certain industries. This was a very thorny question and a committee should be appointed to investigate it. To take only one important problem which such a committee could solve, the freight on rice and paddy from Akyab to Cochin was cheaper than the freight from Akyab to Alleppey by £ ⅛ per ton. The Alleppey merchants had besides high incidental charges, whereas the merchants at Cochin with their well-established business could reduce the incidental charges. It was also stated by some that some of the steamship companies were prepared to offer freight rebates exclusively to Cochin importers. That would create a grave situation for importers at Alleppey. Such and similar questions had to be carefully looked into by a committee of experts.

Touching the Alleppey port itself, the provision of more sea-boats, the construction of an additional boat-basin at the western end of the Commercial Canal, the reduction of sea-boat hire, the construction of additional go-downs, the employment of a steam-tug at the port, these were all questions awaiting consideration.

In conclusion, the member thanked the Dewan for the bold stand taken up by the Government against the Cochin harbour authorities in the matter of reclamation of the Vempanad backwaters.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Janardanan Pillai, I know that you are an ardent champion of Alleppey and that your interest never wanes in seeing what further can be done to the developing of Alleppey and its trade and commerce. On the opening day of the Assembly in my address I gave you facts and figures relating to the trade of Travancore as a whole and Alleppey in particular. In respect of shipping in Alleppey I have since collected a great deal of interesting statistical information which explains

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to a great extent the increase of shipping which you describe as phenomenal. We have to walk warily and act cautiously if we have to see that this trade is retained and habits created and, if possible, further developed. These are all large problems to which I am devoting myself unremittingly and time and again I have been posting myself with information which will enable the Government to act as may be best in the interests of Alleppey and Travancore.

You speak of the need for publicity and for the development of your trade to bring before the world what we produce and what we can do. In these directions, the Government have been acting here with whatever material is in their hands and in such directions as it is in their power to act. I am glad to tell you that it is not only Italy and Germany, as you mention, but America also is becoming interested in the trade of Travancore and already there are indications that this has tended to increase our trade and commerce in one or two directions. But to what extent the shipping of Alleppey has grown you will realise from the list of steamship lines which now regularly call at Alleppey. For instance :

British.

(*a*) The Ellerman Lines Ltd. (Hall line of the steamers).
(*b*) The Ellerman and Bucknall Steamship Co., Ltd.
(*c*) Clan Line Steamers Ltd.
(*d*) Alfred Holt and Co.

German.

Hansa Line Bremen.

Italian.

(*a*) Liyod Sabands.
(*b*) Navigazione Generale Italiana.
(*c*) Societa Vene Ziana Di Navigatione a Vapore Venetia.

All these lines trade between Alleppey, London and Continental Ports, New York and American Ports, the United Kingdom and American Ports from the Far East to the American ports, Italy to Australia, New Zealand, Calcutta to Italy.

In the matter of coasting trade the following lines of steamers call frequently and regularly at Alleppey :

(*a*) British India Steam Navigation Co.
(*b*) Asiatic Steam Navigation Co.
(*c*) The Scindia Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.
(*d*) The Bombay Steamships Ltd.
(*e*) The Orient Steamship Co.
(*f*) The Persian Gulf Steam Navigation Co. Ltd.
(*g*) R. Asaria and Co.
(*h*) The Merchant Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.

Whether any further extension is possible depends entirely upon the hinterland to which every port is subservient. If our hinterland develops and further produce is marketable you may be sure the shipping will be developed. Closely related is the question of easy and quick transport to and from the coast. This is one of the main factors upon which the shipping depends. These are all large questions. Whether a committee can render useful help in these directions is a matter which requires consideration. You apparently have studied the question and if you will be good enough to prepare a memorandum indicating the directions in which you consider it should devote its enquiry, I shall be very happy to consider your memorandum as well as your suggestions.

126. Administration of the Police Department.

MR. R. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Member, Vilavancode taluk*) said that the strength of the police staff of the State remained almost the same as it was thirty years ago. There was no attempt made to raise the number of the staff in accordance with the increasing needs of the country. In regard to the Vilavancode taluk the number had in fact been reduced from 35 at the time of Mr. Bensley to 27 at the

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